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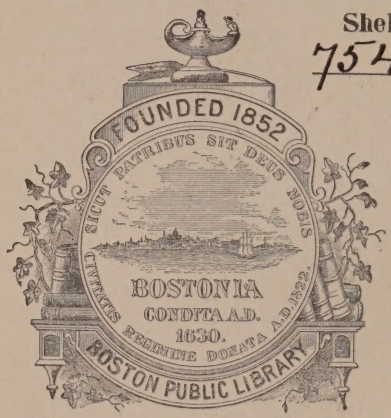

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Rev. Dr Channing
with the respect
Mr P. Lunt

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A

SERMON,

BY REV. N. L. FROTHINGHAM, OF BOSTON.

CHARGE,

BY REV. DR PARKMAN, OF BOSTON.

RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP,

BY REV. F. CUNNINGHAM, OF DORCHESTER.

ADDRESS TO THE SOCIETY,

BY REV. E. S. GANNETT, OF BOSTON.

DELIVERED AT THE

INSTALLATION OF REV. WILLIAM PARSONS LUNT,

OVER THE

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY IN QUINCY, JUNE 3, 1835.

WITH A SERMON,

PREACHED ON THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER HIS INSTALLATION,

BY WILLIAM P. LUNT.

5

THE MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST.

A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE INSTALLATION

OF

7541.322

REV. WILLIAM PARSONS LUNT,

AS

COLLEAGUE PASTOR WITH REV. PETER WHITNEY

OVER THE

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN QUINCY,

JUNE 3, 1835.

BY N. L. FROTHINGHAM,

MINISTER OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN BOSTON.

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SERMON.

TIMOTHY iii. 16.

MANIFEST IN THE FLESH, JUSTIFIED IN THE SPIRIT, SEEN OF ANGELS, PREACHED UNTO THE GENTILES, BELIEVED ON IN THE WORLD, RECEIVED UP INTO GLORY.

Of whom or what is the apostle speaking in this magnificent language? Of the gospel? Of Jesus the master of Christians? Or of something even higher still? Perhaps of all, and yet of neither. Of neither, if we construe it exclusively or too technically. Of all, if we will gather up into one noble idea what lies scattered over it. I will give a name to this idea, and say — the Christ of God. That term is specific, and yet not narrowed down within the lines of any sectarian formulary. It is strictly scriptural. It partakes accordingly of that generous expansiveness of scripture meaning, which the pride of opinion and the love of sway and the minuteness of a vain search are forever striving to chain up in cold definitions. Every one understands it in his own way; and that is the only way in in which I am now concerned to be understood. The Christ! The anointed! The sent! The truth of God! The hope of man! The word of divine life! That is the subject of which Paul is speaking.

Let us pass now to the thing affirmed. It is expressed in several propositions thrown together fervidly and with a certain rhetorical earnestness. There is no need of seeking

in each of them for some special and nicely separated truth. They are evidently heaped upon each other, with the same spirit and intent, and illustrating one great thought. That thought is manifestation. If we look over the particulars enumerated, we shall see that they all bear upon that. Manifest in the flesh; — justified, — i. e. as the original word properly imports, openly acknowledged and attested, by the spirit; seen of angels and appointed messengers; preached, displayed, to the gentiles; recognised in the world; visibly received up into glory.

It was a bright era for humanity, when this revelation appeared; when "the word," that had been made order and design in the outward creation, that had been made reason and understanding and conscience, those inspirations of the Almighty, in the human breast, "was made flesh," and dwelt among us as man with men, full of grace and truth. Herein lies the difference between revealed religion, of which ministers are set chiefly for the interpretation and defence, and the religion that is called natural. It is a difference more in the form than in the articles, — but that form how immeasurably superior to every other, in which sacred instruction has been presented to the mind! How much more distinct, more direct, more satisfactory, more affecting is it, than any of the philosophic theories and barren abstractions, which the invention of man can set up in its stead! We often hear of the voice of nature, as proclaiming the perfections, the requirements, the promises of God. And there is a truth thus affirmed. But it is not a literal truth. We must not lose sight of the fact, that they who thus speak are speaking but in a metaphor. Nature has no voice. Its wondrous courses move on in silence. Day and night do not speak to each other, as they exchange their watches. The song of the stars is a fiction of poetry. Not one of the innumerable sounds in the natural creation articulates the name of Him who gave them their

tone. No language nor doctrine is configured in the brilliant characters of the sky. So in the moral world. There is a conviction of right and wrong in the breast. But it has no tongue. Not the slightest whispers go round among the crowded thoughts of the heart. The hope of futurity, or as the book of Ecclesiastes represents it — the immortal,* is set there, but it is dumb. When the righteous Providence sends down its retributions, they do not tell why or to what end they are sent. All that we receive from these sources is the inferences which we ourselves draw from what we see and experience. We know how dubious these will often be. But the revealed gospel exhibits clear objects to our faith and affections. It speaks out, and its speech is with authority. It draws nigh as a friend. It sends back no inquiring mind with answers too vague to reach its peculiar necessity or trouble. It is personal in all its communings with the children of men. It goes wherever they are occupied, — to the sea-side, to the receipts of custom,—and bids them follow into its kingdom of joy. You are perplexed amidst a multitude of conflicting thoughts. I am the way and the truth. You are a mourner. Death has broken into the circle of your love, or the bondage of its fear is heavy on your spirit. I am come that you may have life. You are afraid of a self-deception in imagining other worlds than this. In my Father's house are many mansions ; if it were not so, I would have told you. You are bowed down under the hard services and cares of life. Come unto me and you shall find rest. You have sinned. Lay hold in repentance on me who am the sinner's friend. You must all appear at the judgment. It is I, who shall be throned upon its seat.

Thus does it prove itself to be of a nature to fill and content the spirits of thoughtful men. After they have been wandering about among the speculations of the learned and

* Ecclesiastes iii. 11.

ingenious, seeking there for the sure grounds of religious truth, of religious trust, they return to the plain wisdom of the gospel, and to its resting place on the rock, and they are satisfied. They look with concern on the dealings of heaven, crossing fatally the paths of mortal desire and losing themselves in impenetrable darkness; and they are saddened at what they cannot prevent, and astounded at what they cannot understand. It is not till they bring down their restless misgivings to the dispositions of the Christian faith, that they acquiesce and are satisfied. We hazard nothing in saying, that it has done more than all other means together to persuade them of the paternal character of God, to lodge in their hearts the spirit of a filial reliance, and to fasten upon their convictions the doctrine of life everlasting.

A little more than eighteen hundred years ago, Christ was manifested to the nations. Manifested. Let me ask you again to mark the expression. He was made known, displayed, presented to mankind, as a living, individual being. Paul speaks of "the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the spirit." And Peter says of his master, "who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." Did he exist then before he was seen? Yes; in the determinate counsel of God certainly. Yes; in all the preparations that were made for his coming among the race of Abraham, and in all the fitnesses that were ready for the reception and acknowledgment of him among the other nations. We may add, he existed in the scattered virtues, wherever they were, of which he was afterwards the complete example; in the broken rays, wherever they spread, of that divine truth of which he became the full orb. He existed so far as the doctrines that he established were suggested, and the spirit that he inculcated felt. Just as he lived in the prophecies of inspired men among the Hebrew

people, he lived in all that was virtuous and intelligent, that was like his gospel and like himself, among all people. Christ is to us at this moment no longer flesh, but a principle of truth, duty and trust. So far then as that principle was discerned and acted on, why may we not ascribe to him in that sense a being before he was manifest in the flesh? We can see something of him who was "the word of God," before as well as since his full disclosure. I might illustrate this idea thus. Moses, in his account of the creation, describes the light as existing before the formation of the sun, and has often been cavilled at for such a representation. But it is the theory of one of the profoundest astronomers of modern times, that the fiery elements of that great luminary were diffused through space, ages before they were gradually collected and condensed into its glowing sphere. May we not imagine something similar of that moral sun, of which Isaiah predicted that the "Gentiles should come to its light, and kings to the brightness of its rising?"

Let us come now to considerations that are more plain and direct. The Saviour that was so much needed, the long expected king, was exhibited in the fulness of time to the children of men. This fact seemed so leading a one to the early church, that among the very first public ceremonies that they instituted was an annual commemoration of it. In order to observe this in the most instructive manner, they selected three points of the Scripture history, and included them all in one service of grateful remembrance. These were the manifestation of Christ by his star to the wise men of the East; that by his baptism and the heavenly testimony that accompanied it; and that by the first of his wonderful works at Cana of Galilee. I can perhaps adopt no better method in presenting what I have further to say, than simply to follow this ancient order.

Christ was manifested, then, by his star, by his baptism, by his first miracle. He is thus the sent, the approved, the

empowered of God. He appears as teacher, saint, wonder-worker.

First, as teacher; "preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world." This was thought to be indicated by the coming of the Arabian wise men to pay their homage. They have been regarded as a sort of first fruits of the nations, and symbols of the conversion of the world. They were strangers and aliens. Their pleasant land lay at a distance from the Jewish border. But they had seen a signal in heaven, and they determined to follow whither it led. The way did not seem long, nor the time lost, nor the peril any thing. They passed the rocks and sands of the deserts, the tents of Kedar and the "hills of robbers." They went first to the capital of the land, for where but in its palaces should its prince be born? But when they found him not there, and it was in a village and under a shed that what they sought for was to be seen, it made no difference to their devoted hearts. There, as freely as they would have done in the halls of King Herod, they opened their fragrant treasure boxes and presented their gifts. Here then was the first manifestation of Christ, his condition helpless childhood, but his sign a star.

The same singular combination of lowliness and glory continued to be allotted to him while he remained on the earth. Look at him in those outward accompaniments that present themselves most obviously to human eyes and affect most strongly vulgar judgments, and nothing could be meaner. Look at him in his great endowments, and nothing could be more divine. He was taken from the poor lodging place where he was first laid, to grow up in adversity and want, to be subjected to humble labors, and even supported by the contributions of the grateful and kind; but a treasure and dignity more than of this world dwelt with him, and his steps were still followed by an effulgence from on high. His visible companions were men from the

lowest professions, but his unseen attendants were the angels of God. He wandered from place to place and was houseless, but his home was beyond the stars. He descended as a pupil of John into the waters of Jordan, but a voice from the skies proclaimed him the far greater one, whose way John was sent to prepare. He died as a slave, but the rocks were rent when he expired and the heavens grew dark with their last testimony to his truth. He was buried like a disappointed, defeated, murdered man; but it was to rise as a conqueror and to ascend as a glorified spirit. And we may go beyond that. His name, that was disdained among his own people, has been taken up and exalted into a word of triumph and hope and joy for the human race.

As he was displayed let him be received, separated from all worldly expectations, passions, vanities; with a spirit as humble as his condition, and a hope as high as his revelation of life. "He had no form nor comeliness, and when men saw him there was no beauty that they should desire him." There was no distinction about him but such as was of a spiritual kind. He endured what we most faint at. He was exposed to what we most dread. He condescended to what the pride of human nature is most ready to despise. And for what? To show us how empty are all outward gauds and delights and honors; how insignificant are all the degradations in which there is no disgrace, and all the sufferings in which there is no despair, when set by the side of the substantial worth and joy of a faithful, confiding soul. They have not seen him or known him, in whose dispositions and affections all this is reversed; who make their Christian profession an associate of ostentation, strife, vainglory; who love nothing but what is easy and respect nothing but what is lifted up; who think only of external appearance and fortune, disregarding the great realities that

lie within themselves and beyond mortality, the noble mysteries of their being, and the testimonies of eternal truth.

2. Christ is conceived to have been made manifest to the nations by his baptism. There was reason for this. The first public act of his life was his going to the river's side, where multitudes were accustomed to resort that they might hear the preaching of his austere forerunner, and there openly to demand of him that initiatory rite. His ministry dates from that moment; a ministry that was to be recorded in languages not then invented, and in those that are now forgotten, and that was to carry its tidings of deliverance down rivers and over seas that had then neither name nor place on the map of the globe. The former instance in which the general attention was called to him was independent of himself. He was then an unconscious child. He did nothing to kindle that guiding fire in the sky, or to call the magian inquirers from their distant homes. Here was an act of his own will. He had reached the maturity of man's estate through gradual increases of wisdom and stature. About thirty years had passed over him of sober thought and laborious experience, of deeper and deeper inspirations. No one knew him. No one asked for him. No fresh embassy from the East came to seek in the carpenter's son for "the desire of nations." The vision of angels seems to have faded away from the memories of men as it did among the gray clouds of the night. The shepherds were growing old who heard the congratulating song in the air, and might have come to suppose that they had but dreamed. The sayings that his wondering mother kept in her heart were silently pondered there still. Like John the Baptist, he may be said to have been "in the deserts," — solitary, unnoticed, unfelt, "till the day of his showing unto Israel." That day was at length come, and he assumed meekly the wondrous office, which was to produce effects not yet perhaps calculated on the communities of the earth.

Two reflections arise out of this department of our subject. One is that we should not grow despondent or unbelieving, when the promises of the Almighty go slowly towards their fulfilment. That is their chosen way of advancing. The purposes of Heaven move not by starts nor act by surprises, but prepare gradually their gracious consummations. Do the Scriptures of the Old Testament describe an anxious looking for of the Christ of God? Those of the New leave the space well nigh blank between the first days of his infancy and the first of his sacred work. The old Israelite, who "took him up in his arms" at his presentation in the temple had long been gathered to his fathers, yet the pledge remained unredeemed. The light that was to lighten the Gentiles had parted with all the supernatural brightness that was its harbinger, and nothing was left to represent it but a young man, without pretensions, without power, unheeded, unknown. But the hour arrived when he was no longer to be thus, and a new and splendid course was thence begun in the influences of divine truth upon man. Let us believe that so it will surely be with all the good intimations that a merciful Providence vouchsafes. They may be dimmed and discouraged and deferred. But they shall come forth from depression and forgetfulness, they shall come up from the wilderness and the waters, crowned with benedictions.

The other thought proposed to be mentioned is this, that there is no true manifestation of the gospel in us till something has been done by our own free choice and endeavor. Where would the Christian faith have been, if its designated teacher had passed the rest of his life as far the greater part of it was spent before, assuming nothing upon himself, but trusting all to the prophecies that went before his birth and the prodigies that hung over his cradle? And what will that same faith be to ourselves, if it is not manifested in the bearing of its vows and the fulfilling of its right-

eousness? The truth that has been revealed is not anything, nor the training of sacred institutions, nor the prayers of faithful men, nor the pointed finger of Providence, nor the endowments of a gifted spirit, till we have put into exercise the faculties and shown ourselves obedient to the call, that the Lord has given us. The disciples must be as their master. Their light must shine before men. They must descend of their own accord into the baptism of his word, or the spirit of its peace will not come down to abide upon them.

3. The last point of Christ's manifestation to the Gentiles, is the beginning of his mighty works. To these he was accustomed to appeal as evidences that he was sent. "Believe me," he said to his countrymen, "for the works' sake." And again, "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin." The first of these, therefore, the conversion of water into wine, was with great propriety selected to represent the rest, not because it had any superior value in itself, but because it was the first. They were testimonies to the men of that day, the only one which the case admitted, of his preternatural commission. And they have not ceased to be testimonies to the men of our own day. Without them, his name might have been held worthy among his contemporaries, but would probably have stopped there, failing to affect the belief of after ages. Without them, he might have been an eminent reformer of his tribe, but not intense and remarkable enough to become the light of the world. Without them, he might have gathered a beautiful school, but would scarcely have founded an impregnable church.

Think what lofty and comforting sentiments were announced by the fine minds of the old world, in the most finished language and under the most favored circumstances. But who was there to vouch for them? They were assailed by opposite speculations. They were thrown into doubt-

fulness by the fears, or into discredit by the infirmities of those to whom they were addressed; — while their generous advocates died, and their memory with them, and little was done in behalf of the great cause that they strove for to the last. Some of them, indeed, obtained a wider celebrity, and have kept it till now. But they who heard them were more ready to respect them after they had gone than to accredit them while they staid, and to set up their statues in the public places than to establish their doctrine within themselves, and to honor them because they heard that they were distinguished than to yield to them because they felt that they were right.

"Socrates," says Justin Martyr, "gave up his life for the truth; but who believed any the more that it was the truth for which he became a victim?" There is great force in the remark. The people, indeed, after his death, were convinced of his worth and his wrongs; but where do we hear that they were convinced of his doctrines? His accusers they banished and slew. But it was because they had destroyed an innocent citizen, and not because they had deprived the earth of a religious guide. His statue was in the forum. But not an image of idolatrous worship was displaced to make it room, and not a garland the less was suspended upon the altars of pollution and shame.

Is there one here, who thinks he requires no miraculous evidence in support of his religious convictions, who feels satisfied with the proofs that the unaided mind can furnish for itself? I will not assail him. I will not charge him with throwing away all faith, because he is willing to receive it on slighter grounds than we trust it is built on. I will congratulate him that he feels his hope to be so sure. I will pray for him, that his convictions may never become less dear among the temptations, nor less steadfast among the convulsions of life; that his assurance of immortality may never grow weak amidst the infirmities of nature, nor confused in the

whirl of dark thoughts, nor dim before the eyes that are looking their last upon earthly things. I will wish that he may never feel the want of that confirming power, which he now fancies to be a useless gift and an uncertain supposition. But let us profess for ourselves, that we needed something more and have found it. We will own that we love to trace our faith further than to the self-taught dictates of a refined intellect and an elevated heart; even to the Fountain of Inspiration. We do not value the gospel merely as a natural gem of great price. We should fear for it, unless we were persuaded that it had not its origin in the dark earth or the restless waters, but in the heights of heaven and in the spirit of God. We rejoice in those unparalleled histories, in which all is so natural yet all so marvellous, and the most artless simplicity is combined with the most astonishing grandeur, and the form of our faith is "manifest,"—brought before our eyes with its harmonious expression of mildness and strength, of sweetness and authority, the affections of humanity and the radiance of higher worlds. We cannot and we would not separate the instructions of Jesus from the mighty works of the Christ. We dare not regard our immortal hopes as anything less than reflections of that glory, which first appeared in the parted heavens and was vouchsafed by a divine agency to a bewildered race.

On the question of religion the human mind has always loved to take refuge in authority. It asks not for reasonings but for manifestations, not for probable conclusions but a rooted faith. It pleads to be assured, to be shown the truth as it has been seen in God,—to be told by one who has received a commission to tell, that its best inferences are no mistake and its best expectancies no delusion. Now it is the miraculous character of Christ that has given to his teaching this new advantage. It has infused this element of strength into his word. It has turned the water into wine.

It has sent round the cheering of its cup for the hearts of believers through all their generations.

Brethren, behold the gospel, which, by the grace of God is preached unto you. Its ministering servants succeed each other fast to the field of its labor, and to a grave in its peace and hope. But the word neither dies nor alters. Give it the grateful reverence that it claims.

CHARGE.

BY REV. DR PARKMAN, OF BOSTON.

My Christian Brother,—At your request, I rise to offer you the charge, which is a received part of these our ordination solemnities. But you will permit me, first, to congratulate you on the good Providence that has graciously conducted you hither, and invites you with this day to renew the labors and satisfactions of the Christian ministry among this people, and in this fair and promising field of usefulness. The experience which you have already had in a wide and arduous scene of labor renders it needless for me to set before you duties and trials, dangers or encouragements, which must already be familiar to your thoughts. But, if I may employ the words without assuming the authority of an apostle, "we will not cease to put you in remembrance of these things, though ye know them and are even established in the truth."

For it belongs, my brother, to that ministry, which we have received, and which it is our highest honor to serve, that it loses nothing of its solemnity, responsibleness or importance with the progress of time or with the advancing years and changes of its ministers. As He, who has given us his word, abides the same, so the truths we preach, and the obligations under which we stand, alike to the oldest and to the youngest among us, are as unchangeable as they are momentous; and if there are dangers in the beginning of

our ministry, there are perhaps equal dangers in its progress; dangers that come with time and familiarity and the delusive power of habit: from time, lest as it multiplies our cares, it induce a worldliness of mind, that deadliest enemy of the spiritual and above all of the ministerial life; lest it quench the fervor of our youthful resolution, the purity and tenderness of our first love: from familiarity and habit, lest they beget insensibility to the great truths of God's law, which it is our duty to announce, and to the solemn events of God's Providence, which for others it is our province to exhibit and improve. Nay, it pertains to the dangers of our calling, that in proportion to the very earnestness of official duty, to the occupation of mind indispensable to the discharge of public service, we may become negligent of our own spiritual wants, and overlook our own personal interest in the great salvation. So that it is not without propriety, there may be even sad necessity — and God save us, my brother, from becoming ourselves the examples of so melancholy a necessity — that they, who might seem from their term of service the most experienced in the Christian ministry, may most need the admonition once addressed by the spirit to the declining church of Ephesus, "I know thy work and thy labor and thy patience. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee. Remember from whence thou hast fallen, and repent, and do thy first works."

I need not remind you, my brother, that you are "separate" to the gospel ministry. This is a term of great significance, selected by the spirit of God to denote the evangelic work, intimating at once its nature and spirituality. You are separate, not from your fellow-creatures, for your office most intimately connects you with them in sacred relations and mutual hopes; not certainly from any sympathies or offices of our common humanity — for these are but the instruments of our usefulness; nor yet from the exposures,

temptations, or sorrows of human life — for what man is he that liveth and shall not see them — but from the vices and corruptions of the world, from vain pursuit of its riches, honors, or pleasures; from fears of man that ensnare, from hopes of man, that must be disappointed, from secular employments that distract, from indolence that rusts, and from passions that corrupt the soul. Of the wisdom, with which the term is employed to mark our office, I need not speak. For all history and experience have attested, that in every age and under every aspect of the church, they have most adorned their profession, and made best proof of their ministry, who have been most faithfully devoted to their work. And it is for us to remember, who have enlisted in this spiritual warfare, that no man that warreth entangleth himself with the things of this life, that he may please him, who hath called him to be a soldier.

Of the various duties of our profession, there are those which by their nature are unchangeable, of equal and indispensable obligation upon all the servants of Jesus Christ, wherever we are and under whatever circumstances we may be placed. These enter essentially into the very nature and end of our vocation, without diligent heed to which, its primary intention can never be fulfilled.

Of these it is our most obvious duty, that in which we must especially seek to approve ourselves to God, and to which all others must be auxiliary, — to "Preach the Word." For even hereunto, my brother, are we called. This is the peculiar office of the Christian ministry; and we must bring to it the choicest offerings of our souls, the most faithful and industrious service of our lives. The pulpit is eminently the theatre of the gospel, on which its doctrines, duties, and sanctions must be exhibited, and where it must be our first care, as it is also our distinguished honor to "make manifestation of its truth." By read-

ing, meditation and prayer; by observation of nature and the works of God; by attentive study of the human heart, the hidden springs and motives of human conduct; by acquaintance with the various characters and conditions of men to which our pastoral fidelity will specially contribute; by an adequate survey of human learning, illustrating, as it does, and establishing the records of inspired truth; above all, by devout study of the oracles of God, referring ourselves to their unerring guidance, yielding ourselves absolutely to their authority, we shall become able ministers of the New Testament, and may hope to contribute something at least to the intellectual and spiritual progress of them, to whom we are sent.

But the most faithful preaching will not of itself avail. Though you spoke, my brother, with the tongue of an angel, and could spread before your people the collected wisdom of ages, your ministry will be comparatively inefficacious, unless you add to your labors as a preacher the fidelity, watchfulness, and tenderness of a good pastor. No sooner had the apostle charged his friend Timothy to preach the word than he added, "Be instant in season and out of season." I exhort you, therefore, to teach not only in this consecrated temple, but from house to house. He that would be a faithful minister must visit his flock. I know that there are unreasonable expectations in relation to this part of our duty, which not the most conscientious or devoted pastor can meet; expectations whose nature it is to enlarge in proportion as they are gratified. I am aware also, that there are diversities of gifts, as well as of dispositions for this service, which it belongs to an affectionate people to consider; for they are among the diversities of operation, by which the Lord of the spirit and the maker of our frames accomplishes his various designs. But surely it is for us, my brother, to take heed that by no negligence, or indolence, or selfish preference of personal

gratifications to duty, nor yet of the public to the private labors of our ministry, we incur the condemnation of the faithless shepherds of Israel. "The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was bruised, neither have ye brought back that which was driven away." We shall not fail to satisfy the requirements of an enlightened conscience. With the good shepherd, who knows his sheep and is known of them, we shall seek the wanderer, we shall bind up the broken heart, we shall comfort them that mourn, and speak peace to the wounded spirit. To the aged and to the young, to the honorable and to the obscure, to the rich in his fulness and to the poor in his straits, to God's widowed and orphaned ones, we shall be according to our various relations even as a son and a brother, a father, counsellor and friend.

Above all, my brother, let me charge you as you desire the efficacy of your ministry and the affection of your flock, as you would maintain the answer of a good conscience towards God, never suffer your people to want you or wait for you in the seasons of their grief. That is a fatal misapprehension of the duties of the ministry, and betrays an unpardonable negligence and indifference of spirit, that would make us slow or reluctant in the chamber of sickness, in the house of mourning, or at the bed of death. Be present there wherever else you must be absent. Never suffer the humblest or the meanest to complain with justice, that they are forgotten of their pastor in their griefs. Let your ministry be like the blessed gospel it proclaims or like the grace that ordained it, kind even to the unthankful, and pitying them, who have none else to pity them.

Let us be assured, my brother, that no time spent faithfully and charitably in the house of sorrow is lost in our preparation for the house of God. There is in truth a close

connexion as there is a reciprocal influence between the services of the public teacher and the visits of the good pastor. While your teachings from the pulpit will convey their own authority and dignity to your familiar intercourse, repressing idle gossip, "foolish talking and jesting, which," says an apostle, "are not convenient," — your friendly intercourse, through the confidence it will inspire in the trueness of your friendship and sincerity of devotion to your flock will secure an interest for even your plainest public instruction, will convert the indifferent into friendly and attentive hearers; and dispose them to regard with indulgence — if indeed they should discover — those defects, which the most conscientious and laborious minister amidst various and indispensable duties must not seldom find reason to lament.

And even should these our pastoral labors sometimes encroach upon the hours we would gladly consecrate to study, to the gratification of a refined and intellectual taste, or to what might be deemed the most agreeable and profitable intercourse of society, who that has enlightened his conscience, who that is animated by a hearty "love of souls," will doubt for a moment what engagements he should prefer, or whither duty should lead?

These considerations, at all times momentous and worthy to command our earnest self-application, acquire, I apprehend, an additional interest from the aspect of the times and the circumstances under which we stand. The period in which you have consented to renew your ministry is a period undeniably of difficulty and hazard. That which once seemed stable is fluctuating, and a large surface in our ecclesiastical condition is exposed to change. The supports of law for the institutions of religion are withdrawn; and both the ministry and the churches, the order of God's house and the worship of the temple must henceforth be sustained by the volun-

tary zeal, the faith and reverence of the people. Who shall abide this trial but the faithful, diligent, conscientious pastor? who but the believing, serious and united flock? The people must feel, that they need us; that they cannot and ought not do without us; that Christianity, in its ministry and its ordinances not less than in its written truth, is essential to the peace and prosperity of a nation; to the order of communities; to the happiness of their families; to their joy in prosperity, to their solace in grief; to the welfare, present and eternal of their immortal souls.

We charge you, therefore, my brother, — yet not we, but one mightier than we, whose servants we are, and in whose name we speak, — to make full proof of your ministry. Study to show yourself approved of God. Warn the unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient towards all men, and may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever.

RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP.

BY REV. MR CUNNINGHAM, OF DORCHESTER.

On me, Sir, devolves the pleasant duty of giving you, in the name of these assembled churches, the *Right Hand of Fellowship*. Take it as the pledge of our sympathy and interest in your labors, as well as of our co-operation with you wherever it may be desired ; and may the blessing of Heaven rest on you and those with whom you are now to be connected ; may you long be bound together in the closest bonds of Christian love, and grow daily in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

On my personal gratification and pleasure in welcoming you here as a new neighbor, I may not dwell — I know I need not dwell. I stand here as the representative of the churches, to offer you their fellowship and must speak in their name. In reflecting what this fellowship is and what I ought to say, I can think, no words better fitting this occasion and the relations in which we all stand to each other, than those of the Apostle John. "*If we walk in the light*, we have fellowship one with another." We make no conditions. We bind you to no creed. We ask of you only *to walk in the light* — the glorious light of the Sun of Righteousness ; to shun the darkness ; to follow with a single eye after the truth. And we pledge ourselves, before God, whithersoever it may lead you, though your path

may diverge wide from ours, still to extend to you the right hand of fellowship ; and when we can no longer reach you, to bid you God speed. Ah, my brother, how difficult this principle in practice. How hard is it for any of us to believe that those who walk away from us, are not straying out of the light ; that they can see where we are blind. As the principle professed by these churches, it ought, however, to be distinctly recognised in all their public acts. We welcome you as a brother, but as a brother whose birthright we dare not touch. We exhort you to keep it even from us, if at some future time we should seem to approach it.

And here I might stop, but that one thing seems necessary to explain and qualify, though not to limit, what I have said. It may be said too, in the words of the Apostle when describing his own reception to the fellowship of the churches : "Only we would that you should remember *the poor*." I mean "the poor *in spirit* :" the babes in Christ. Feed them not with meat when they want milk. Give them not roots for green leaves. I mean still more, those who are hungry and thirsting after the living bread and water. Feed them not with chaff. If ever a burden was laid upon men to preach the Gospel, the pure unadulterated, refreshing, life-giving Gospel, it is on us. For what else have we thrown down the barriers that surrounded the well-spring of life, but that its pure waters might burst forth and flow over for all to drink ! Wo to us if we preach not the Gospel ! If we make it not effective in changing men's hearts ! Who shall believe that we "walk in the light" if we lead others into darkness ! what responsibility then rests upon us. "If the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted ?"

But I detain you too long. Let me end as I began, by saying to you in the name of these churches, that you are

most welcome amongst us, and that we deeply rejoice to see you once more taking upon you the duties of the pastoral office. May He, from whom all good counsels and all worthy thoughts do proceed, let his blessing rest upon you and this people, and prosper you through the Gospel of his Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

ADDRESS TO THE SOCIETY.

BY REV. MR GANNETT, OF BOSTON.

Fellow Christians of this Church and Society, — At your request the ecclesiastical council assembled on this occasion have by the usual services set apart our brother to the ministry of the gospel among you. And now in compliance with a similar request do they through me express to you their sympathy and convey to you their counsel. They rejoice with you in this auspicious hour. The good providence of God having placed before you one in whom your hearts could unite, we are glad that you have called him to exercise his gifts permanently among you, that in co-operation with him under whose ministry you have long sat he may confirm you in the faith of the gospel and in the experience and hope of eternal life. Proffering you, brethren, our cordial congratulations, we ask you also to listen to the words of our anxious regard. Let us speak plainly, Christian friends, for the truth's sake: let us speak with earnestness, from the love that we bear you. We could say much, for it is a great theme which you have put into our lips: we shall say what the time will permit of what the times demand.

First then, we exhort you to consider the connexion this day sealed a permanent connexion. Regard it as made by you and your children on the one part, and by this your servant in the Lord on the other, for life. Let the

language of your hearts on this occasion be that of the marriage covenant — mutual love and fidelity we promise till God in his holy providence may separate us by death. The fashion of the hour is adverse to this doctrine. It is not the less true, because it has been said till it has sunk into a commonplace, that we live in an age of change. Instability is one of the characteristics of our times; and a bad feature it is. Let us preserve the institutions of religion from its presence. If the bond between minister and people be of so loose a nature that a breath of dissatisfaction may dissolve it, it will soon be a question whether it be worth forming. The itinerancy of the Methodist Church, I am persuaded, is a better arrangement than the system which is growing up among the Congregationalists — Orthodox no less than Unitarian — of New England, and in some measure among the Presbyterians, and the Episcopalians even of the United States. Brethren of this society, there is your minister. You have asked us to invoke the blessing of God upon your union. We have done it; and now we say unto you — Hold this union sacred — break it not for a slight cause. He gives you his heart; beware how you throw that heart, after a little curious inspection and some rough handling, upon the world's pity.

The efficacy of your minister's labors will depend very much upon the manner in which they are entertained by you. It is a sad mistake, though far from uncommon, to suppose that the clergyman alone is to blame for the deficiency of religious character among his people. They must do something, or they will get no good from his instructions, be those instructions ever so sound or ever so fervent. They must come, they must listen, they must remember, they must practise; or he might as well be quarrying the insensible granite on yonder hill — he might better be praying in his closet for them, than preaching,

whether to those who cannot hear, because they are not within the reach of his voice, or who will not hear because they prefer to sleep, or who hear only to forget or to disregard. An apostle or an angel might preach under such circumstances without effect. Come, Christian friends, to this house of your solemnities regularly and punctually. Do not let an excuse which would not satisfy you for neglecting any of your secular engagements be accounted sufficient to justify your remaining at home on Sundays. Do not choose this day for visiting your friends in a neighboring town or for being sick, because you "cannot spare the time" to be sick or to take a ride on any other day. You can spare the time better on any other day than this. Be constant in your attendance upon the services of this house: we do not say, for his sake who will stand in this pulpit; but for your own sakes — as you love your own souls.

In the pulpit let your minister tell you the truth. Allow him freedom alike in his inquiries after the truth and in the utterance of it. Ask him neither to be the copyist of other minds nor the reflection of your own. Let him speak out himself. You have not invited him to occupy this place that he may be the echo of the opinions and sentiments that are popular with yourselves; or if you have called him hither with such a purpose, the sooner you find that you have mistaken the man, the better. God forbid that he should ever be afraid to say to you what he thinks you ought to hear. Better that his tongue should be palsied with disease than his heart with the fear of man. The motto of the knight of chivalry should in both respects describe the character of every Christian minister, "fearless and irreproachable." The clergyman who must consult the humors of his congregation and shape his sermon to their notions works in chains; he does nothing heartily, he does nothing well. His situation is neither enviable nor tolerable. The dungeons

of an Austrian fortress would be preferable to his pulpit. Let your minister enjoy independence of thought and expression; let him present the doctrine which he gathers from the oracles of truth; let him inculcate the practice which he believes is required of Christian disciples; let him give forth his honest convictions and his deep feelings, though they startle many a prejudice and rebuke many a sin in your bosoms. If "an honest man" be the "noblest work of God," a dishonest minister is the vilest work of human creation.

Do not estimate the value of the discourses which you shall hear from this place by the evidence which they may give of rhetorical skill or of a rich imagination. Value them according to their suitableness to make you better. Truth is sometimes injured by ornament, as in paintings the representation of the Saviour is made less impressive by the rays with which a false taste has encircled his head. The most effective sermons — and the merit of a sermon consists in its power of producing results — the most effective sermons have always been the plainest. Yet do not expect that your minister can preserve a uniformity of excellence in his discourses. It is demanding an impossibility. The mind has its variations — even more than the body — more inscrutable, more uncontrollable. Think but for a moment of the injustice of requiring one mind to furnish a perfect oration every week month after month, and year after year. Why, Pharaoh laid no such task upon the children of Israel!

In the private intercourse which your minister shall maintain with you encourage him to use the utmost frankness and cordiality. Repose in him full confidence. If he abuse it, he will fall so low as to deserve your pity more than your censure. Treat him as your friend, and let him treat you as friends. Now a friend who will never tell us our faults is not worth loving or keeping. Be not then

offended, when he exercises this privilege of friendship. Above all, let him hold free conversation with you on the subject of your religious wants and ways. Let his visits be something more than agreeable calls; let them be occasions of spiritual improvement. It is not altogether the fault of the clergy, that so little good comes from the private intercourse between minister and people. Much of the difficulty of which many are ready to complain, and which all should regret, must be ascribed to the latter. If they always leave it to the former to introduce the subject of religion, or if when it is brought forward they immediately assume an air of constraint, and instead of a pleasant interchange of thought the remarks of the visitor be made, however much against his will, to wear the aspect of a private homily, how can we wonder if he be discouraged, and gradually, or perhaps unconsciously restrict himself to the style of conversation which alone the parishioners seem to enjoy. And what is then the result? A people without religion, and a minister without influence, — a church like that of Sardis of old, "having a name that it lives, but is dead." Brethren, dread such a condition more than you would dread the prevalence of a fatal disease in your town. By open and confidential communication with your pastor sustain him, stimulate him if he need excitement, reward him if he be faithful in his office of parochial minister. Inform him of your spiritual state — of your doubts and fears, of your purposes and hopes, of your experience of the power of truth, of your progress in the spiritual life. The religious character is nourished by conversation as much as the plants by the dew. They need the sunshine and the rain, together with the nutriment that they draw from the bosom of the earth; and so must the sentiments of a holy character be fed with sustenance from the soul whence they spring, and be supplied with the more obvious means of growth — the

privileges and trials of condition; but as the former, so likewise these latter thirst for the refreshment which distils upon them in yet gentler influences.

We would urge you to co-operate with your minister in the support of those measures which he may deem of general importance. Concur with him in upholding institutions by which the interests of truth and virtue, the security of social order and the advancement of the social state may be promoted. The philanthropy of the day deserves your attention, and if properly regarded must awaken your sympathy. It is a philanthropy which has had so rapid growth, that it may need pruning, and there may be danger of its overshadowing some of the more humble manifestations of private worth; but it has a sound root and a healthful trunk. Some persons seem to regard it as an exotic, but I hold that it is indigenous to the soil of Christian character. The fears which are entertained on this subject are extravagant, and appear hardly less absurd than those of a man who should deny himself food lest he should sometimes eat to excess, or should refuse to alarm his neighbor whose house was on fire lest he should be guilty of an intrusion upon his privacy. The principle of association is abroad, and it is a good principle; men find it good in worldly concerns. Christian benevolence would take advantage of it; — Christian benevolence, whose instinct is social. The hostility, the distrust, the reluctance, the apathy, which distinguish some portions of the Christian body in respect to co-operation for the wider or deeper influence of whatever is sound in theology or correct in morals, cannot but be sources of regret, if not of amazement, to those who believe Christianity ought to seize on the characteristics of the age, be they what they may, and subject them to her own purposes. Nothing has ever been better settled by experiment, than that personal excellence is aided by participation in plans of social improvement. It

is too late to insist upon the opposite doctrine. No truth is more obvious than that love is diffusive, and no position can be taken on firmer ground than that truth and good must be spread by human agencies. I wonder much how the improvement of the world would go on, if just where things now are the intelligent and virtuous should stand upon the doctrine of isolation, and leave the ignorant and vicious to take care of themselves without help and without sympathy. Spirit of Jesus, save us from such a period! Brethren, we exhort you to send abroad your anxieties, and to extend your labors in behalf of your fellowmen. Let your minister find in you cordial supporters of every measure and every institution by which knowledge may be diffused, faith implanted, vice restrained, or piety invigorated.

Let your minister have your cheerful and effectual aid in his endeavors to lead up your children to the stature of perfection in Christ Jesus. Regard with sincere delight his efforts to teach their eager minds and to impress their ductile hearts. But do not leave to him the whole work of forming their religious characters. The chief glory and great responsibleness belong to you. Especially let us entreat and charge you, — in the same spirit of fidelity in which we have charged our brother not to neglect the young of the flock let us charge you, — not to counteract his exertions by your own counsels and examples. Let not the influences of the sanctuary and the influences of the household stand in contrast with one another. For your children's sake, if not for your own, cultivate family religion. Be the voice of praise and prayer heard in your dwellings, and the language of Christian truth familiar to all their inmates. Nourish in the young bosoms that will beat in unison with your own an interest in spiritual things. Call forth the moral nature, give it exercise, enlighten it, fortify it, and let the spirit of childhood

bathe daily in the fountain of salvation. Give to the Sunday school your warm support. Do not let this institution, one of the best gifts of modern times to society, do not let it languish. With the faithful parent, it will neither prevent nor hinder his own instruction. It will not hinder it; for how can an hour or two in the week spent with other teachers deprive a child of a single lesson from parental lips. It will not prevent it; for what father or mother that cares for the eternal well-being of their offspring would allow the attendance of their children upon other instructers to be a justification of their own negligence. No; the domestic culture will be most assiduous where the parochial assistance is most gladly received, while on the other hand those children who have the best discipline at home will be placed with the freest sympathy under the influences of pastoral care and tenderness.

Finally and chiefly, brethren, we exhort you to cultivate personal religion; for this is the one thing needful, and this it is without which on your part your minister's life will be disappointment and grief. Now this he cannot give you; he cannot be good for you, nor make you good against your own wills. You must "purify your own souls in obeying the truth." He will preach and pray and talk with you, and make all his studies and all his thoughts conduce to your edification. I do not say to you, be slow to call upon him for professional services. On the contrary I say, and I believe it is what he would wish a friend to say who should speak for him, call upon him continually for ministerial duty. Do not consume his time with idle interruptions, do not visit him only that you may inspect his domestic economy, nor invite him to your houses only that you may entertain him with the frivolities of this world's hospitality. But never hesitate to ask his sympathy or advice in regard to your spiritual state. Let him do you all the good he can.

Give him frequent opportunity in private as well as in public. Still he can only assist you. He cannot perform your work. And now, fellow Christians, what is that work? It is your own sanctification. It is your entrance and perseverance upon the path of eternal life. It is self-conquest, self-discipline, self-perfection. This is your work, and we beseech you to take it up and give your strength to it. You have this day solicited our help in establishing among you yet more securely the ministry of the gospel of Christ; and you have by this act certified your acknowledgment of Christ as your Master. This Master requires of you obedience. He died for you. You have kissed

> "Those blessed feet,
> Which eighteen hundred years ago were nailed,
> For our advantage, to the bitter cross."

Is it the kiss of traitors which you have given? Have you cried "Hail, Master!" in the ears of the world, only that you might make your hypocrisy more notorious? May God save you from such guilt! May your own desire of safety, your own sense of obligation, save you from it. But, brethren, you can avoid such guilt only by following the commandments of the crucified Saviour. Hear ye not the words of his apostle? "We are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." They come down to us through the long course of ages, but they have as distinct a meaning and as solemn an appeal for us as for the contemporaries of Paul. We too are redeemed from darkness by the mission of the Son of God. We build our hope of heaven on the words which he spoke. We look to his character as the brightest manifestation of the Invisible One, and to his life as the model by which we should form ourselves.

Moreover, brethren, there is a peculiar obligation upon

us to present before men the loveliness of the Christian character. For we belong to a portion of the Church of the Lord Jesus which is traduced by its opposers. Our doctrines are misrepresented, our arguments will not be heard with candor, our good name is aspersed. What can we do for the faith that we profess, and that I hope we love as God's best gift to our souls, what can we do for it but live according to its instructions? What more can we do, did I say? I should not have asked that question. We can do much. We can avow and defend and in many ways recommend our faith, and in spite of evil tongues and suspicious hearts and countless hosts it will spread. We can send it abroad on the wings of the wind, and God will give it a resting-place and a fruitful germination. But we can do nothing so effectual as our exemplification of its influence in our daily lives will be. We can use that argument before which even prejudice must succumb — the argument of holy living, the best preparation for the next most convincing argument — that of holy dying. Let us live as Christians and die as Christians, and though we may not see the good which we shall do, a persuasion will go forth from our familiar walks, and a voice will speak from our deathbeds, which will gather thousands into the embrace of the same precious truth with ourselves. Oh, what can we desire in preference — what shall we place in comparison with this power of usefulness through the efficacy of personal goodness? Riches — houses, lands and money? No, no. We are too wise to exchange a diamond for a bauble. Let us but open our eyes and see things as they are, and we shall choose that good part which cannot be taken from us.

Besides, brethren, to add one word more, upon us devolve great responsibilities. We live in the midst of a solemn crisis. And who, under Providence, shall take the direction of the world's destinies? I know not who, if it be not they

who have gone before their fellows in the discovery of the truth, and are willing to hold it up as a light to the multitudes and the generations that are following on. I do not believe that God ever laid a weightier charge upon any body of men since the times of the apostles than rests on us. If we supinely neglect it, we shall bring shame upon ourselves and disaster on the world. If we will come up to the work of the Lord, and deport ourselves like men and Christians, we may be the benefactors of our race, and our example descend like a sweet fragrance to future times. God help us to understand and discharge our obligations! One thing is plain — that unless we are upright and devout men, full of faith and good works, we shall be false to our high position, and bury our memories in everlasting reproach.

Christian friends, I have spoken of some of the duties which the times press on your attention. Let our words be received with kindness. And now let us utter our farewell wishes. The blessing of Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with you. May he join your hearts with the heart of our brother in the bond of an indissoluble love. May your lives run on harmoniously together, ye being strengthened and comforted in one another. May the last years of our respected friend to whom this day gives an associate in his labors be his best days. And hereafter may we all — ministers and people — you and we, with them too whom we represent, be found in the congregation of the sons of God before the eternal mercy-seat.

ORDER OF SERVICES.

1. ANTHEM.

Now elevate the sign of Judah, now elevate the banner, call it forth in Zion. O desert us not, O Lord; thou art always gracious to thy servants. Thou art our God, O Lord of hosts; so will we praise thee, O God and lord of hosts. Amen.

2. INTRODUCTORY PRAYER AND SELECTIONS FROM SCRIPTURE,

BY REV. G. WHITNEY, OF ROXBURY.

3. HYMN,

BY MR F. A. WHITNEY.

All-seeing One! whose presence fills
The glorious earth thy children tread,
Unseen, the sacred shrine be near,
To which our gathering steps have led.
The sacred shrine,
Great God, be near,
And, as we bend, the offering hear.

We turn to thee, in humble trust,
With prayer and praise, our heavenly friend,
That on this hour thy smiles may rest,
Thy choicest influence may descend.
Oh let thy smiles,
Great God, here rest,
Thy blessing, and we shall be blessed.

Lo, where thy elder servant stood
Through changing years, there still he stands;
To aid him in the sacred cause,
Another comes with youthful hands.
Him aid, Great God,
That sacred cause
Pursuing still by Heaven's own laws.

Oh bless him, Father, bless him now
With faith and truth and hope and peace,
And as his years shall onward roll
Let not thy saving mercy cease.
As years shall roll,
Great God, increase
His ardor and his usefulness.

And when at last he binds his sheaves,
His harvest labors o'er and blest,
The golden grain, Pure One, receive,
And call the reaper to his rest.
The golden grain,
Great God, receive,
As pastors flocks and temples leave.

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4. SERMON,
BY REV. MR FROTHINGHAM, OF BOSTON.

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5. PRAYER OF INSTALLATION,
BY REV. MR WHITNEY, OF QUINCY.

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6. CHARGE,
BY REV. DR PARKMAN, OF BOSTON.

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7. RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP,
BY REV. MR CUNNINGHAM, OF DORCHESTER.

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8. HYMN,
BY REV. MR FROTHINGHAM.

We meditate the day
Of triumph and of rest;
When shown of God and shaped in clay
The WORD was manifest.

The angels saw and sung;
Earth listened far and wide;
Believed and preached, — a faith, — a tongue,
The WORD was glorified.

Lord! give it gracious sweep,
And *here* its errand bless,
Whose mercy sent it o'er the deep
To glad a wilderness.

Ray out its starry* light
To guide our pilgrim way;
A sign of hope through this world's night,
And brighter than its day.

Again thy witness-voice!
Again thy spirit-dove!*
That hearts may in its trust rejoice,
And soften with its love.

Send round its blessed cup*
As once in Galilee;
And catch our dull affections up
To Heaven and Christ and Thee.

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9. ADDRESS TO THE SOCIETY,
BY REV. MR GANNETT OF BOSTON.

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10. CONCLUDING PRAYER,
BY REV. MR HUNTOON OF MILTON.

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11. ANTHEM.

Glory be to God on high and on earth peace, good will towards men. We praise Thee; we bless Thee; we worship Thee; we glorify Thee; we give thanks to Thee for thy great glory; O Lord, God, heavenly King, Father Almighty! Glory be to God on high. Hallelujah, Amen.

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12. BENEDICTION.

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* One of the ancient symbols, in the church, of Christ's manifestation to the nations.

A

SERMON,

DELIVERED IN QUINCY ON THE LORD'S DAY, JUNE 7, 1835, A. M.

BY WILLIAM P. LUNT,
Junior Pastor of the First Congregational Church in Quincy.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

SERMON.

2 PETER, i. 12.

WHEREFORE I WILL NOT BE NEGLIGENT TO PUT YOU ALWAYS IN REMEMBRANCE OF THESE THINGS, THOUGH YE KNOW THEM, AND BE ESTABLISHED IN THE PRESENT TRUTH.

THE Christian ministry was instituted, among other objects, to be a memorial of the great and solemn truths of religion.

We know not how soon a practical belief in such truths, and the influence exerted by them, might be lost out of the world, were there not some standing institutions, like the weekly Sabbath, the celebration of public worship in churches set apart from common purposes, and consecrated to holy meetings; or a body of men maintained for the express purpose of devoting themselves to the study and inculcation of divine truth; men who, freed from secular cares, and not walking in the dusty highway of life, nor mingling with the rushing crowd in their eager scrambles for wealth, place and power, may pursue a by-path of their own, catching glimpses of Truth in her most private retreats, and listening for that still, small voice which she utters only to the calm, meditating soul.

The scoffer and sceptic, and sometimes even the believer, in an unreflecting hour, or when in a desponding mood, are ready to ask what good is effected by these institutions; or what harm would ensue, should they be discontinued or neglected. The philosopher, in love with some theory of

his own for improving the condition of society, and distrusting, perhaps contemning, established usages, because of their commonness and simplicity, will turn away from you when you argue for the usefulness, the vital importance of Christian institutions. You recollect, my hearers, in the Old Scriptures, the striking story of Naaman, the leper. This captain of the king of Syria's host was afflicted with a most loathsome disease, common in the countries of the East. Having heard of the prophet Elisha, in Samaria, he obtained permission of his king to visit him. He journeyed, it seems, in a style suited to his rank and station; he came, we are told, "with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha." The prophet of Jehovah, with that indifference to worldly pomp and parade which the religious sentiment, when fully unfolded, is ever likely to produce, did not even step to the door to receive the haughty invalid; but sent a message to him that he should repair to Jordan, and wash in its stream, if he would be cured. At this he was wroth. His personal pride was hurt, that he was treated with no more deference by the prophet; and his pride of country was offended, because Jordan was preferred to Abana and Pharpar, those noble streams that watered his own Damascus. It was a simple remedy which the prophet proposed; there was too little of circumstance in it to please one whose imagination had been dazzled by Eastern splendor and parade. But it was an effectual remedy, as he found, when his pride was sufficiently humbled to allow him to resort to it. And it is the same often with social distempers. Men are apt to undervalue those simple customs which, as experience has proved, are suited to preserve the health of the community. It is true, there is often a difficulty in measuring the amount of direct, visible benefit derived from the Christian institutions. And the conscientious and faithful minister of Christ, in particular, is tempted to despair of seeing any fruit of his

labor. But this seems to be part of the allotment of Providence to men. It seems to be part of the discipline assigned them, that they must labor without always enjoying the satisfaction of witnessing the good results of their toil. Still they may comfort themselves with the persuasion, that a very considerable amount of good is accomplished, when those institutions, which serve as so many *memorials* of religion, are barely preserved. The entire amount of good, of which these are instrumental, cannot be estimated. We may form some idea respecting it, by attending to our thoughts and emotions, and tracing them to their exciting causes. If we will but reflect, then, how strong is sometimes the impression produced upon the mind by so simple a circumstance as the tolling of church bells, on a calm Sabbath morning, or what a gush of fervent feeling is not unfrequently sent through the heart by the sight of the church where our fathers for many generations have worshipped — if we will attend, I say, to these comparatively small things in our mental experience, and will consider how many thousands and tens of thousands throughout Christendom are affected in like manner, silently, but most powerfully, we can judge with some accuracy how much good the Christian institutions are doing, regarded simply as *mementos* of religion. There is in them a natural language, which speaks directly to the human heart. There needs not the intervention of arbitrary signs, which men have agreed to adopt, as expressive of thought and emotion. The object without, as it meets the eye, awakens immediately the corresponding sentiment; and a more powerful sentiment it is often, than any eloquence of mere words can inspire. It was on this principle, as is well known, that the Jewish ceremonies were instituted. Many of them, such, for instance, as the passover, were strictly commemorative; all were designed and calculated to suggest to the mind of a Hebrew his obligations to Almighty God, and to

remind him how much had been done for his nation. When the Israelite presented himself, at stated times in the course of the year, at the temple in Jerusalem, the sight of that magnificent pile, erected in honor of Abraham's God, must have filled his soul immediately with ideas and feelings which the most learned and eloquent of the Jewish doctors might have failed to excite by any language, however fitly chosen.

What are the things of which the apostle is anxious to put his followers in remembrance? Faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity. And these are the themes upon which the minister of Christ will still discourse.

The language of the apostle in the text deserves notice. It is courteous, respectful, affectionate. It suggests a remark which the general tenor of the New Testament will bear out as true, viz. that the earliest followers of Jesus assume no authority to themselves arrogantly; they evince no disposition to magnify their office, to challenge the respect of men; they do not appear like common men, when in possession of office and authority; they show no jealousy lest they should be neglected or disobeyed; least of all, have they any of that overbearing, haughty tone which the impostor assumes towards his duped disciples. The apostles of Christ were "men of like passions" with others. They had originally the same love of power, the same jealousy of interference, the same ambition and pride as other men. Before they had taken lessons of a celestial virtue in the school of Christ, their passions were as towering and craving as those of their countrymen. Witness the occasion when they contended which of them should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven; and also when they were ready to call down fire from heaven upon their enemies. The meekness, humility, modesty, which are ever attendants upon real authority, were, however, at length acquired by them. Let it be borne in mind that these

qualities were *acquired* in their case; that they learned them from the teachings and example of Jesus; that they were not the native growth of their hearts, but the fruit of Christian cultivation.

The text proves that these qualities were possessed by Peter in an eminent degree. Highly distinguished by his master among his fellow-disciples, singled out from the rest as the foundation rock of the Christian church, an ardent, passionate man in his temperament, we yet find Peter speaking to his converts in the affectionate and courteous terms of the text, *reminding* them of the important things of religion, lowering himself to an equality with them, and speaking like a brother interested in their welfare. A deceiver would not have been likely to assume this tone and manner. There is a selfishness in deceit, which prompts it to demand all the homage and personal adulation and servile respect which it can obtain.

The text well expresses the object for which the Christian ministry was established in the world. Not that the proud ecclesiastic may "lord it over God's heritage," not that he may unlock the doors of heaven to admit whom he will, but simply that he may put his fellow-men in remembrance of the things which concern their spiritual welfare. The modest and delicate manner of the apostle in the text, is a rebuke to those who would dictate to their brethren what they should believe; who are not content faithfully to set forth the truth, and honestly, sincerely exhort to the practice of righteousness; but, impatient of the slow process of reason and persuasion, would force men in a summary way into the kingdom of heaven.

It is not to impart new knowledge, that the Christian ministry is most needed and valuable. But it is to remind men of what they already know; to hold up in some new form, it may be, or to set in a more striking light, if possible, the most familiar truths and facts; to press home upon the

conscience considerations and motives which have been repeatedly presented; to tell men what they themselves know; to interpret their own consciousness; to put in a distinct form, and clothe in words, what has long lain in their minds without order and arrangement. Nor is it an unimportant task, or one unworthy of the highest talents, thus to mould into new shapes the commonest thoughts and principles. He who can throw light upon those dark masses of thought, over which the intellect sometimes broods without satisfaction, or can restore harmony and peace to those feelings which have been agitated, torn and jarred almost to madness on the great themes of religion, will accomplish no small amount of good. In the head-work and the heart-work of religion, we all need the aid and sympathy of others.

It will be the office of the Christian minister to remind his flock of that commonest of all facts, and least heeded, too, their mortality. The ancient Egyptians, we are told, introduced a skeleton in the midst of their feasts, in order to temper the gaiety of their guests, by the ghastly symbol of mortality. And one of the ancient kings was continually attended by a monitor, who repeated in his ears, "Remember that thou art mortal." There was something strange, you will say, in these modes of effecting the object. True. Perhaps they were suited to the times, or to the particular circumstances then existing. *Modes* are temporary, continually changing, and giving place to others. But the sentiment is unchanging which they were designed to express. Man's mortality, the uncertainty of life, the transitory nature of all this world contains, these are the greatest common-places in morality. They are so, it is granted. And yet, perhaps, they contain as much of wholesome virtue, and exert as large an amount of restraining, subduing influence, as any considerations that can be presented to the mind. Since the sentence was first passed upon

man, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return," there has crossed the stage of being no generation, no individual, that has not felt the force of this simple, but most solemn truth. It has been uttered in the ears of the great ones of the earth, and they have felt their thrones tottering beneath them, and "the fine gold has grown dim" in their sight. It has been as effectual as any truth, perhaps, in bringing low the pride of ambition, in cooling the fire of lust, in moderating inordinate appetite, in qualifying the fell spirit of revenge, and in loosening the determined grasp of miserly avarice. The proud monarch of Persia was humbled only by the reflection that death would mow down his brilliant ranks of troops, and leave not one for another century to behold. The solemn truth was first uttered by God himself to Adam, and not a heart since but has quaked under its influence. Nor is the force of the lesson lost. The minister of religion now, is to repeat the solemn truth. He will endeavor to moderate that excessive attachment to this world which is so apt to possess all. He will seek to create, or rather to call forth new desires, tastes, affections in his hearers. He will seek to unfold the true uses and objects of living. In view of the vanity and transitoriness of all worldly objects, he will seek to engage and fasten the affections of men upon what is truly worthy, what changes not, but endures forever. Our mortality is interesting to us, not so much because we are mortal, as because there is that within us which is immortal. Death has been well called — a circumstance in the Christian's being. A *preparation for death* — what meaning is there in this phrase, if death be merely corruption — irrecoverable decay? And this naturally leads me to my next topic.

It will be the duty of the Christian minister to put men in remembrance of their spiritual, religious, immortal nature. And this is a great and important topic. Nearly all, if not quite the whole, of a minister's work consists in, or may

be reduced to this one point, to convince men that they have souls. I do not mean, barely bringing them to allow by dwelling upon the common topics of argument, that this is so, but making them *realize* that it is so. And by their having souls, I mean nothing vague and indefinite, but that there is in man a spiritual and religious nature, as much as an animal nature ; that the one is just as real as the other ; that we have a spiritual constitution and frame, as much as a bodily organization ; and that, as there are senses, appetites, wants, desires, affections belonging to and essentially composing the one, so there are spiritual wants, feelings, desires, belonging to and constituting the other : — as there are fixed laws according to which the body moves, and preserves its health and comfort, so there are laws according to which the inner man, as the Scripture terms it, the soul, the spiritual nature, moves, operates and preserves its health and peace. If you expose yourselves on the brow of a precipice, and fall, you cannot avoid injuring, if not destroying the body. If you indulge beyond a certain extentthe appetites given for the preservation of life, you derange the animal system. These are laws which the wise Creator has made for the benefit of the outward frame. And the case is the same, although not so much thought of, with the spiritual nature of man, the soul. That, as has been remarked, has its constitution, its system of laws by which it must be regulated. If its wants are not satisfied, it will suffer in the same way as the body starves for want of food ; if its faculties, perceptions, affections are not exercised and cultivated, it will languish, grow weak and fruitless, and finally die. Now the minister of religion must endeavor to convince his flock of this ; to show them that by neglecting or spurning religion, they are not merely resisting certain foreign arguments, and denying themselves a good from abroad ; not merely " treading under foot the Son of God," and

"doing despite to the spirit of grace;" but that they are wronging their own selves, are denying themselves an inward gratification, as much as though they refused to eat, or to satisfy any of their bodily wants. In other words, it must be felt that to be religious is as much fulfilling the design of our natural constitution, as growing up from childhood to manhood is fulfilling this design. The study of the soul is the great, the chief employment of the minister; the soul is as much his concern as the body is the concern of the physician. He must study its anatomy, so to speak; the nature, symptoms, remedies of all the diseases to which it is liable; he must understand when to use the knife, and when the strengthening cordial may be given. He must study the morbid anatomy of the soul, as presented in the ravings of enthusiasm, the phrensy of fanaticism, the bitterness of bigotry, the tremors of superstition, the lethargy of indifference, the madness of infidelity; and he must learn how best to "temper the fervors" of zeal, and heighten the languor of insensibility: — and, as it is a principle with the physician to apply remedies with a view to assist nature in throwing off the disease, and restoring the outward system to health, so it will be a principle with the spiritual leech, to remove all the impediments to nature's exerting her own powers, apply such reasonings, incentives, motives, as shall help the soul to recover its natural state, and to throw off those obstructions which sin or unbelief or worldliness may be interposing in the way of the free, healthy exercise of its powers. Let him seek to unfold to men their nature; to show them what they are, as constituted by God; to convince them that they are doing violence to the leading principle of their nature, when they neglect the subject of religion; that the foundation of religion is in the soul of man. We talk of arguing for the truth of religion, of summing up the historical evidences

for Christianity, and of calling men's attention to the expediency, the usefulness, the incalculable benefits of religion to society. This is all very well in its place; but it must be in its place, in order that it may be well. We must lay the foundation, before we can expect to rear the superstructure. We might as well address these arguments to an oyster as to a man, before we have made him sensible that he is a religious animal, that he is made for religion, as much as for eating, drinking or sleeping. It does no good to tell a man what to believe, or why to belive, until first we have made him feel that it is natural to believe something. Belief — I mean in its most general sense — faith in something beyond and above what we can see and handle and examine with our senses, — faith in this sense is as essential to human nature, as the senses are; and a man might as well ask why it is necessary to eat, and refuse to eat until he has a reason for so doing, as to ask why he should have faith, and refuse to exercise this part of his nature until he is satisfied. All that can be said in reply to him is that such is one of the essential laws of our being. Faith is instinctive. It does not depend upon reason. Faith is commonly viewed, I know, as the result of reason exercised upon the subject of religion. Now this, as I would contend, is not the natural order of things. Faith is first in order, is not consequent upon reason, does not depend upon reason, has nothing to do with reason. And this strong assertion will, I trust, be understood. I am speaking now of the principle of faith, as it exists originally in human nature, without referring to particular articles of belief. There is a principle in human nature which, antecedently to all reasoning, spontaneously, instinctively rises above the world, to what is unseen and spiritual. When we come to exercise this principle, to apply it, and regulate it, the work of reason commences. Reason does not make us

believe ; belief depends upon an original, independent law of our nature. Reason teaches us what to believe, and what to reject. We may illustrate this point by reference once more to our senses and appetites. We do not take food because we have first reasoned ourselves into a belief that on the whole, food will be beneficial and salutary. No such slow process is gone through before we satisfy our hunger and slake our thirst. It is instinct, a more ready monitor than reason, that prompts us when we need refreshments of this kind. Has reason then nothing to do in the matter? Certainly it has a most important work to perform. It enables us to judge what and how much to eat ; to determine what sorts of food are best suited for different states of the system, and a variety of other particulars which need not be here enumerated. And it seems to be the same with regard to religion. We are not religious — we do not believe — because it is reasonable to be religious, and because reason requires us to believe. There is a stronger ground upon which the subject may rest. It is natural, unavoidable, instinctive to be religious, to believe. We are so made that we crave the subject, we need something for our faith to rest in, our hopes to cling to, our affections, to fasten upon ; — earth does not, cannot furnish worthy and satisfactory objects. The future, the unseen, the spiritual, these furnish objects which alone can satisfy our natural wants and desires, and here we arrive at religion, before reason has been exercised at all.

In the theory of religion that has just been proposed, reason is not undervalued. I know this doctrine may be abused, that it has been grossly abused in past ages of the Christian church. What then ? It is not the less true on that account. Reason has its place, and a most important place too, in connexion with religion. Reason does not make us believe ; we believe before we reason. Wherever man is found, religion is found, in

some form or other. This proves that it is natural to the soil of the human heart, indigenous to the soul. But we also find that it exists in a purer form, exerts more wholesome influences, and produces better results in those countries where reason has been most cultivated, where the light of knowledge and civilization has been most generally diffused. And this shows us what is the true province of reason in connexion with religion. It is to direct the religious principle to right objects, to limit and restrain its tendencies. When it is asserted that religion is natural to the human mind, it is not meant thereby, that whether considered as speculation, sentiment or principle, it springs up in a human mind in a perfect state: but only that human nature is prepared for it, inclines to it, has faculties, capacities and affections suited to it. But like every other principle in our nature, this of course is susceptible of improvement by cultivation.

Such is my theory of human nature in reference to religion; — others may not adopt it. It seems to me however, not a mere barren theory. It bases religion firmly in the human constitution, and thus furnishes the best assurance we can have of its essential truth. Let it be not only understood but felt by a person that this is the case, and there must be much more vitality in that man's religion. Let him, instead of perplexing his mind with subtle doubts and distinctions, follow the leadings of his own spirit, attend to that internal voice which is ever calling him to God and heaven, and suffer his natural affections to operate and expand themselves as they will. There is no danger of his being irreligious, if he will but do this. — "Quench not the Spirit," — is one of the most important directions in religion. There is a certain fund of religious and moral sensibility lodged in every breast originally by the Creator. Do not exhaust this fund. Weary not the strivings of the better nature within. In

rendering to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, do not forget to render unto God the things which be God's. While you are careful to exercise the faculties of your bodies and your minds, do not permit your souls to lie barren and uncultivated.

I have dwelt the longer upon this topic of the present discourse, because, when rightly understood, this does in fact include all the duty of a minister of religion. Whether we consider him as a teacher, as a public monitor, as the mouth of the congregation of worshippers, — or as a pastor, in his more private walks among his flock, his object will ever be to address the souls of his congregation, to convince them that they have souls; — in other words, to call into exercise those powers and affections which belong to religion, to develope and enlarge those sentiments which relate to God, eternity, judgment, heaven and hell. It is, therefore, an expressive and beautiful phrase by which the minister of religion is said to have the "care of souls." The care of the body is entrusted to the nurse or the physician; the care of the mind to the schoolmaster; and the care of the soul belongs in like manner to the clergyman.

The great work of a minister is, I repeat, to remind men that they have souls, that is, in every possible way, in public and private, by his pulpit services and by his private intercourse, so far as that is official, to seek to stir up, bring out, quicken the religious sensibilities which are implanted in every breast, being given, it is true, to one man in a larger proportion than to another, but yet in some proportion to all. It is no more than ought to be expected that such differences should appear in individuals. We find analagous differences in the endowments of body and mind and heart. All men have not equal strength of muscle, vigor of intellect, or warmth of affection. Neither have all equal sensibility to religious truth.

Yet no individual can be found wholly lacking a susceptibility of religious impression. There is in every bosom a chord which, if found and struck, will vibrate in harmony with the general sentiment of mankind.

In thus reminding you that you have souls, or in addressing your spiritual natures, your minister will be effecting all the peculiar objects of his office. If he can succeed, in the pulpit or in private, in making his people realize that they have a religious nature, in awakening a religious consciousness within them, he will have accomplished the principal thing. The soil of the heart being thus prepared in a proper manner, particular truths in religion, special articles of belief, will take easy root, and spring up and bear fruit abundantly.

That man who is conscious of a religious nature and of religious wants, will not hesitate concerning the being of a God. The idea of God will be strongly impressed upon his mind. He will feel the want of some living, intelligent, perfect Essence, upon whom, as a central point, all the deepest affections of his soul may gather, and to whom, as an ocean, even the fulness of the Godhead, all the fervid and strong currents of his spirit may flow continually.

In endeavoring to remind you of your religious natures, your minister will be preparing the way for a hearty reception of the doctrine of Providence. You will not be satisfied to believe in a God, unless you also believe that he is near unto every one of us, that in him we live, and move, and have our being. Let a man's religious nature be once unsealed, let the closed fountain in the soul be unstopped, let him understand how much of his happiness is involved in religion, and he will be little likely to rest content with a bare belief of God's being. He needs the thought of God's constant care. He wants the assurance that He who created likewise preserves, upholds, sustains. His heart will prompt him to recognise God in every event that takes

place. Amidst the celestial worlds that roll over his head, he will delight to place that regulating mind which harmonises all. Amidst the revolving seasons, he will rejoice to trace that hand which turns the vast orrery of nature, and presents the changing faces of the varied year. Amidst the multiform events which are continually taking place, making life a mystery, and driving the reflecting mind hither and thither without satisfaction, he will rejoice to assure himself that there is an inspecting eye that "sees the end from the beginning," and an arranging wisdom that makes all "work together for good" to the righteous.

Once more — remind a man of his religious nature, bring him to be sensible of his spiritual wants, and you prepare the way for the great idea of God's moral government, and the consequent necessity of virtue. A pure mind will form to itself no other idea than of a pure, holy, righteous God; and a corrupt mind *dares* form no other idea. If you can but succeed in awakening and developing the religious nature, the ideas of obligation, virtue, judgment, retribution, will spring up as necessary attendants in the mind. The germ of every one of these ideas is in the soul, and nothing better serves to quicken them and make them fruitful, than religion. Human virtue may be encouraged, without doubt, by many inferior, merely worldly considerations. You may base a system of morals upon interest, upon expediency, upon the fitness of things, upon taste, and may draw from such sources some strong considerations in favor of virtue. But after all, such systems must be imperfect and deficient. Holiness can only be *perfected* by the *fear of God.* Unless man's higher nature, his religious nature, be considered, virtue loses the key-stone of its arch. Morality and religion are mutual supports to each other, essential to each other's completeness. Would you make a man's conscience quick, tender and susceptible, you must strive to make him sensible of his religious nature. Let

him realize that he has relations to a Supreme Being, whose perfections are the foundation of all right and justice, whose will is the root of all law, and the idea of whom is as inconsistent with sin as light with darkness. Let the idea of perfection which belongs to God be developed in the mind, that idea, for instance, which the Scriptures encourage; and there will be an internal standard by which a man may try himself; a model to which to refer his thoughts, affections, actions; a point to press forward to. That moral excellence which is the fruit and result of mere worldly principles, must be meager indeed. But the religious nature of man and the relations he sustains, as a religious being, to other worlds and higher orders of beings, are inexhaustible sources of motive, and furnish an armory of bright and polished weapons to the moral man.

And, moreover, to make a man fully sensible of his religious nature, is to prepare him in the best manner possible for a reception of revealed religion, for a fair and impartial consideration of the character and claims of Jesus the Christ. A man must first realize that he has a soul, that he has affections and desires not to be satisfied with earth and earthly things, before he can appreciate the gospel. To that soul which does not realize its spiritual wants, its immortal nature, its connexion with other worlds and superior beings, its capacity for endless improvement, its need of a perfect Being to love — to that soul Christ has not been, and cannot be *manifested.* To such an one, no light descends from that *emblem-star* which guided the impatient magi to the birth-place of the infant king; he sees not the "*spirit-dove*" alight upon the head of the anointed one; nor does he taste from the "blessed cup" the first fruits of Messiah's authority. To him it is a vain thing that the word was made flesh, and "shown of God" to mortal eyes. For him the light may as well have existed in a diffused state, as have been concentrated in the Sun of Righteous-

ness, to enlighten and warm the moral world. *He* cannot benefit by a teacher, who feels not the want of instruction. *He* will not appreciate Christ the Redeemer, who is not aware of the miserable bondage of sin. The best preparation for a hearty reception of the gospel is that conviction of the need of farther light and aid which is gained from long continued reflection upon religion, from the exercise of the spiritual nature, and a contemplation of those sources of religious knowledge furnished by reason alone. In that humble state of mind induced by the poverty of our knowledge on the most important topics of inquiry, we gladly go to the wonder-working Saviour, and we understand what are the benefits of his mission. In such a state, "Christ is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption;" or, as another Scripture expresses it, "Christ is formed in us the hope of glory." The value of revealed religion, of Christianity, must be estimated by considering the little worth of all other sources of knowledge, and the infinite importance of the subject on which it sheds its rays.

My hearers, *now* Christian brethren, I have presented you a few thoughts on the duties which are incumbent on the Christian minister. The providence of God has ordered that henceforth I shall stand in that relation to you. And I know not that I can do better than to adopt the langnage of the text, on this first occasion of meeting you in our new relation, and say, "I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth."

To the aged among this people I may address myself and say, I will not neglect to remind you of the blessings which a good providence has heaped upon you; to repeat the testimony which years of trial bear to the value of virtue and piety. And I shall not fail to feel how much more need there is of my being reminded by you on this point.

Like the spies of the Jewish host, who were sent before to examine the promised land, you, my aged friends, have gone before our generation, and have surveyed the fields of virtue; and you seem now to be turning back with the assurance that it is a good land, "a land flowing with milk and honey." We see you bearing in your hands the plucked fruits of the land. You hold them up, and we hear you say, This is the fruit which grows in the soil of virtue; we gathered it as we passed on our way. And though you may tell us that you "saw the children of Anak there," we will not, like the timorous Israelites, be disheartened by your report. Great danger has, we know, ever been the attendant of great advantage. The golden apples of virtue, according to the ancient fable, have ever been watched by a dragon's eye. But Hercules triumphs. Principle is victorious. Or, in the words of an apostle, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me."

And if it should so happen that some among you may have lived to this late period of life without a conviction of their duty as religious and accountable beings, let us indulge the hope that here they may yet be effectually reminded of what they have neglected, and "that they may not see death before they have seen the Lord's Christ." And if here in the chosen temple of our solemnities, some word may be uttered, some influence be exerted, which shall serve to *manifest* Christ to their hearts; like Simeon of old, may they embrace the infant principle, and rejoice that they have been permitted, before their departure, to see the salvation of God.

To the young of the flock I may say — It will be my duty and pleasure, my young friends, to remind you of the God who made you, of the Saviour who bore such as you in his arms. You have a strait and difficult path to walk in through life. I shall hope to be instrumental, through God's blessing, in making some good impression upon your

tender hearts, which shall not need to be effaced in the great day of account.

To the middle aged in this society, let me also utter a Christian greeting. Upon you, who are yet in the midst of your days, the burden of this church's interests must mainly rest. I shall hope effectually to remind you of those principles upon which alone character and happiness can be safely based. As you are immersed in the vortex of business, with passions excited and engaged by passing events and earthly objects, you will suffer me, who am standing by, a calm spectator, to caution you lest you set your affections too much upon things below; to hold up to you "the prize of your high calling in Christ;" to point out to you that "pearl of great price," which outweighs all the treasures of mammon; that rest and peace which are more to be desired than the world's turbid pleasures; that favor of God which is ever to be set before the favor of man; and that "crown of glory" before which earthly honors grow pale.

I shall hope to remind the sinner of his transgressions; the afflicted, of the hopes and comforts of the gospel; the rich, of the hazards and temptations which beset their path; the poor, of the substantial blessings which are within their reach; the sick, of patience and humble trust; the dying, of the compassion of God.

The duties which have been enumerated are to be performed not only in public, on the Lord's day, but in private also; and you must be aware that it is not an easy matter to perform at the same time the public and private offices of a minister. The habits of the student which enable the minister to prepare for his pulpit services, and the habits of the pastor are not a little different. You would not wish your minister to abandon his study, and become a mere gossip, a traveller about from house to house; nor would

you have him shut himself up in his closet, and avoid your society. You wish to be acquainted with him. You hear the word more joyfully on the Sabbath from one whom you can number among your personal friends. In all this, the person who addresses you agrees with you. But at the same time you will allow me to say that there is a degree of vagueness and indefiniteness in this part of a minister's duties which occasions some difficulty. I must trust largely to your candor, therefore, in this respect, and must ask you to consider what and how much is practicable. Take into view the time which must be allowed for preparation for this place; the domestic duties which every householder must perform; the time which must be given to attentive friends, as well as to the needed refreshment of body and mind; take this into view, and at the same time remember that the sick and afflicted of one's charge have always prior claims to the pastor's sympathy and services, and you will be able to form a more just idea *how much* is *practicable* in the way of that general visiting of which I now speak. Once or twice in a year will, it is thought, strike you as the reasonable amount that can be expected. But enough of this. I humbly offer to you, and to my respected associate, the senior pastor of this church, whatever service I may be able to render. It will not certainly be necessary I should remind you of what is due to him who has so long occupied this place. "He stands where he has stood through changing years," as another has already reminded you. He who has sprinkled your infant brows with the water of baptism, or divided to you the memorials of a Saviour's death, or united you in the tenderest relation of life, or been the instrument by whom you have paid your last respects to the remains of those you have loved, must ever be regarded with a peculiar interest. It is right — is it not? — that, as his years increase, the respect which is

paid to him should increase, while the duties required of him are lessened.

And now, brethren, let us indulge the hope that our new connexion, as pastor and people, has the approbation of Heaven, and that it will be followed with the best fruit to our souls.